

VALOR RESOURCE FAIR HELPS VETERANS CONNECT

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director



On June 19, 2014, over 218 veterans lined-up around Bob Hope Patriotic Hall in downtown Los Angeles to attend the first-ever veteran resource fair, hosted by the LACDMH Veteran and Loved Ones Recovery (VALOR) program and the Department of Military Veteran Affairs. Lance Asamura, LACDMH Community Worker, organized the event on behalf of the VALOR program. Over 50 veterans previously without healthcare were enrolled during the event.

Over 80 vendors participated, helping veterans with all types of services and resources, including employment opportunities, mental health and medical services, benefit establishment, education assistance, peer support, legal services and linkage to housing. Many vendors gave away food and clothing, free books were available at the entrance, even free haircuts were offered.



Wendi Tovey, L.C.S.W., ASOC District Chief, welcomed the busy crowd. “We see strength and promise in you, the people we serve, for surviving all you have. It is our turn to provide support and relief to you, who have done so much for our country. We look forward to assisting all on the recovery journey and helping you to thrive. We recognize your gifts and all you have to offer, and will aid you in realizing all you can be.”

Tovey summed up the purpose of the fair: “You are our ‘Butterfly Effect,’ created in order that you might make a difference. You have within you the power to change the world. Your life ... and what you do with it today matters forever.”



Carl McKnight, Psy.D., Program Head of the VALOR program, said, “It was a honor and privilege to welcome home veterans of every era, regardless of discharge status and VA eligibility to Patriotic Hall.”

Asamura stated, “I would personally like to thank everyone that participated in our first annual event. Without each of you this would not have been possible. I look forward to seeing all of you next year!



To our co-sponsoring agency, Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, thank you for all your hard work and may this be the beginning of a long and prosperous relationship. And lastly, thank you VALOR team for all the help and support that each and every one of you provided to make this the success that it was. I thank you and salute all of you!"

The VALOR program embraces the definition of a veteran as follows: *A veteran is anyone who served our country in a military branch, regardless of their discharge status, service connection, medical eligibility and/or deployment history.*

